SHORT STORIES FOR COLLEGE CLASSES

THE LONG TRYST[1]

A STORY OF OLD HAMILTON

By SAMUEL HOPKINS ADAMS

. . . and forever, in after years,
At the thought of its bloom or the fragrance of its breath
The past shall arise,
And his eyes shall be dim with tears,
And his soul shall be far in the gardens of Paradise.

—*Wishmakers Town.*

I

LAURIE'S coming was as strange as everything else about him.

The old college had gone to bed to the lullaby of a May wind. From the chapel tower, the habitant voice sent one golden note winging out into the darkness. The night was full of little whispers and faint fragrances.

A light glimmered, lonely, on the campus. It shone from the open window of Belden, who was working late on the final draft of his junior chapel oration. A vagrant breeze entered the room, breathed across his tired eyes, and twitched suggestively at the paper beneath his fingers.

"A good reminder," said Belden gravely, to the breeze. "I think, myself, it's time to quit."

He crossed to the window, and inhaled deeply of the sweet air. A voice came up to him from far below.

"Is that North-North-Second-Front-Middle?"

Belden did not recognize the voice, but he had a quaint, vague

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feeling that its owner had been waiting to accost his room a long, long time—an hour perhaps, or a century.

"You've got your geography right," he responded, peering down. "And who are you?"

"Laurie. Laurie, '12."

"What are you giving me?" demanded Belden, puzzled. "There's no Laurie in '12."

"If there isn't, there will be to-morrow."

"The class will be honored," retorted Belden sardonically. "But why am I selected as special nocturnal repository for these glorious tidings?"

"Do you expect me to explain from here?" queried the voice plaintively.

Belden laughed. "Come up, then," he invited, his curiosity amused by the strange encounter. "Follow the railing to the second landing. There are no lights."

He heard the entry door swing, and presently the bidden guest's quick footsteps, mounting. Then the voice near by:

"Sixteen—seventeen—eighteen; and that's the top."

A slender, well-set figure appeared in the doorway, and stopped, giving Belden a moment's opportunity of appraisal. He got a quick physical impression of clean-cut, muscular competency, and a quick psychological impression of poise and power. The stranger looked to be not more than nineteen or twenty. His telling characteristic lay in the eyes, which were deep and bright, and looked out, with a singular and engaging frankness, from beneath a high forehead. Luxuriant, deep-brown hair curved and crested above—the hair of a faun vivifying the head of a dreamer.

"Well?" said Belden.

"Meaning 'What's your business here?' " translated the visitor. "I want to live here; here in North-North-Second-Front-Middle."

"Well, of all the fresh and verdant nerve!" burst out Belden, his upper-classman dignity ruffled.

"I know, it must seem so to you," agreed the other. "But perhaps when you under——"

"Will you have the infinite condescension to inform me when I'm to move out?" interrupted the other. "Have you seen Prexy's house yet? Maybe you'd like that better than my humble quarters."

Laurie's candid eyes never wavered. "I'm sorry if I've offended you," he said composedly. "I didn't expect you'd let me come

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at once. But I thought perhaps later you'd take me in. I don't believe you'd find me a troublesome roommate. And most people like me," he added, with a childlike ingenuousness.

Belden laughed outright. "It doesn't seem impossible," he conceded. "Sit down. No harm in talking it over, anyway."

"Do you mind if I look about a little?" asked the visitor. He glanced at the inner apartment, where Belden's bed and dresser stood.

"Where's the other door?" he said in obvious surprise.

"What other door?" asked Belden quickly.

"Why I don't know. I thought—" the younger man rubbed his hand across his forehead, confusedly—"some way it seemed as if there ought to be two doors there. And there's only the one wide one."

It happened that Belden had once looked up some historical details of Hamilton College architecture. "This used to be a triple-room," he said; "but that was before the building was remodeled, in the fifties. You weren't here half a century ago, I suppose."

"I've never been on the campus until I took my exams to-day. Yet it all seems so familiar and natural to me——"

"Never been here before?" said Belden, looking at him keenly. "Then how came you to reckon the exact number of steps for the second flight, when you came up the stairs in the dark?"

The caller shook his head musingly. "I just felt, deep inside me, that there ought to be eighteen steps, just as I expected to find two narrow doors over there. And just as I feel that this room is home."

"So you've intimated already. Any particular reason for your delusion of locality?"

"The call of the blood, I suppose. Since my earliest memory I've always meant to come back to Hamilton."

"Back? Why, you just said you'd never been here before."

"But my great-grandfather has. Class of 1812, Hamilton Oneida Academy. He never graduated, though. Some trouble with the faculty; I don't know what. So I've returned to finish out his course."

"And where has your breed been since the year 1812?"

"Where not! Over the world and under the world," chanted the extraordinary visitor, "and back at the last to—Alma Great-Grand-Mater. *Cœlum non animam mutant*, you know."

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" 'Constant the heart through all the changing climes,' " paraphrased Belden, with a smile. "Then you have 'run across the seas'?"

"Thousands of miles. Straight to this very spot."

Belden considered for a moment. "You mean me to understand that this is the room where Laurie of 1812 lived, in his academic days?"

"North-North-Second-Front-Middle. The same."

"Youngster, you win," pronounced Belden. "I can't go back on a tradition like that. No Hamilton man could. I'll take you in at the beginning of the fall term."

"I knew you would," returned the other contentedly.

"Meantime, if you care to turn in for the night, you'll find the couch all right."

"Thank you," said his guest. He threw off his coat and loosened his collar. "Oh, here's something that might interest you," he added, a trifle shyly. "It was my great-grandfather's." And he held out to Belden across the table a huge, old-fashioned cameo scarf-pin.

Advancing a step to take it, Belden stumbled. The pin fell to the table, and opened across its length.

"That's odd!" cried the boy; "I never knew there was a spring."

He touched it, and a slender lock of hair curled about his finger, like a living tendril. Underneath the hair a single white flower, exposed to the atmosphere, was already crumbling away. From it arose the subtly sweet odor of the white violet, perfuming the whole room.

"Strange," said Belden, "how powerful that is. And after all these years. But of course that must have been put there long after."

"No," replied Laurie positively. He closed the pin over the lock of hair. "My grandfather—the son of Laurie 1812, gave it to me: and he had never worn it. He told me so. Good night." He threw himself on the couch and was asleep directly.

It was dim dawn, when Belden was awakened by a stir and rustle of papers in the outer room. He leaped from his bed, and saw Laurie seat himself at the writing table, dip a pen in the ink, and draw to him a sheet of his (Belden's) unfinished manuscript.

"Here! Drop that!" cried the astonished host.

Laurie paid no heed. He bent over and his pen met the paper.

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With a jump Belden was at his side—and drew back from the other's unseeing eyes. Very gently he laid a hand upon the writer's wrist. Laurie started up.

"What is it?" he said confusedly. "What have I been doing?"

"Walking in your sleep, I think," answered Belden.

Laurie did not seem to hear him. He stumbled back to the couch and lay quiet. For a time Belden stood watching him, then returned to his own bed.

The insistent clamor of the "first bell" called Belden back to consciousness. His guest was gone. Pinned to the couch pillow was a penciled note.

Thank you for taking me in. Forgive me for being such a troublesome guest. Au revoir! DONALD LAURIE.

With the paper in his hand, Belden turned to the desk. Slantwise across his essay manuscript ran a single broken line of writing.

Faith, dearest one. After all the weary ye——

Belden held the two writings up, side by side. He scanned them critically, looking from one to the other. They were utterly unlike.

II

By the end of the fall term, following, Donald Laurie had become something of a figure in college. Ripley Belden's fraternity, the "Arrowmen" (as they were called from the winged dart against the black background of their badge), opened to Belden's roommate. He was, in a quiet way, popular, and, even more, conspicuous. Frank and open-spirited as he was in all his relations there was, nevertheless, about him a certain air of reticence, of mystery, which piqued the interest of his eager-minded fellows. No man was more talked about, none less questioned; for Laurie maintained his own reserve, and college boys, rough though they be in formalities and externals, respect with a specific delicacy and restraint the intimate matters of their close-knit life. Only once was Laurie put directly to the question. That was when "Twink" Starr, the irrepressible member of the Arrowmen, scandalized the dinner table by blurting out:

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"Who are you anyway, Don? And where the devil do you come from, and why? And how do you know more about Ham-Coll than all the rest of us put together?"

There was a wrathful murmur about the table. But Laurie replied with perfect good humor:

"Me? Oh, I'm a revenant. And I came from the farther edge of last century. Because—well, because the place drew me."

"And now, Mr. Inquisitive Sophomore," rebuked Belden, with the severity of the grave and reverend senior, "if you'd use your face more as a receptacle for food, and less as a lever to pry into other people's affairs, you'd set a better example to the freshmen."

Starr muttered an apology. But Belden noticed that the last detail of his composite question—Laurie's profound, intimate, and, as it were, instinctive knowledge, of the many and often subtle traditions of the old classical college—had received no answer. The thing had often puzzled Belden himself. To be sure, Laurie had a passion for old records and Hamiltoniana of all sorts. But that alone was insufficient to explain how a man who had been in college less than a year, and whose ties of association were of the remotest, could have become a recognized authority upon the unwritten laws which are so potent a factor in undergraduate life. More than this, and stranger, Laurie had become, as by some miracle, a sort of embodiment of that intangible but potent quality, Hamilton spirit; a spirit tested and refined by the stress of high rivalry with other and, most often, larger institutions; a spirit which, time and again by sheer loyalty of heart and unflinching resolution of temper, had won victory from many an all-but-lost field; which, whether in victory or defeat, stood for standards of honor as unyielding as its stern old standards of scholarship. If the college had been called upon to pick its typical "Hamilton man," it would have selected Donald Laurie.

And Belden, his nearest friend, would have agreed with the decision; but he would not have comprehended how it could be so. He did not pretend to understand Laurie.

"You can no more *know* Don," he once said, "than you can know a dog or a star. He thinks with a different mind."

Reticent by nature, Belden had implicitly respected his roommate's reticence. He had never even shown him the somnambulistic handwriting, memento of Laurie's first night in North-

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North-Second-Front-Middle. Nor did the episode ever come to speech between them until one warm, still afternoon, late in April, nearly a year later. Laurie, now a junior, was working over material on early traditions, from which he proposed to make an article for the Lit. called "Campus Lore." Belden looked up from the baseball shoe he was lacing, and said:

"Don, did you dream of anything in particular last night?"

"I often have vivid dreams," Laurie said. "Why?"

"You walked in your sleep. Are you given that way?"

"Never did it before in my life, so far as I know."

"Then you don't know. You walked the night you first butted in here."

"You never told me."

"Didn't see any reason to. What's more, you wrote."

"Wrote? Where did I write?"

"On my manuscript. Here it is."

Laurie took the sheet of paper. "Hoot!" he said, at the first glance. "That isn't my handwriting."

"Yet I saw you write it, with my own eyes. And you wrote again last night."

"What?"

"I don't know. I didn't look to see. When I spoke to you, you pulled the paper away and went back to bed. What I want to know is, in case you do this nocturnal authorship stunt regularly, do you want to be stopped or shall I let you go on?"

Without replying, the junior shuffled among the loose papers on his desk. Presently he held one up.

"The same writing as the other," he said. "It can't be! Yet——" He passed his hand over his eyes, with a strange, half-desperate gesture. "Here's the name again; Faith."

"Don't let it get on your nerves, Don," advised Belden, soothingly. "Sleep-walkers always do queer stunts, I'm told."

"But—but Faith. That's what I can't fathom. Rip, do you ever have strange, almost unbearable struggles to recall something that keeps just beyond your reach? Just over the farther margin of memory."

"It afflicts me chiefly in Math," remarked Belden.

"Don't joke," returned Laurie with unaccustomed sharpness. "I may not ever speak to you of this again. But I've got to speak now, and free my mind of it. Rip, I don't know and I never have known any girl named Faith. Yet the name, as it

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stands written there—why, the very sight and sound and perfume of it catch my breath in my throat. Can you understand that, Rip? I can't. And yet I ought. My heart stirs with it and knows; but not my mind."

"See here, Don," said Belden, after some hesitation, "you said a queer thing just now. You spoke of the perfume of the name. Do—do you use perfumery yourself? Last night, for example?"

"Of course not!"

"Yet, when I woke and found you sitting there, I would have sworn to the scent—Don," he said, breaking off suddenly. "Does the name 'Faith' suggest the scent of white violets to you."

"Yes," said the other. "How in Heaven's name did you know that?"

"The room was saturated with the odor of them last night. Oh, come, Don! This is getting fairly uncanny. Get on your togs and let's practice that run-in for a bunt with a man on second."

Laurie shook his head. "No; I'm going for a long walk to clear my brain," he said.

Long, solitary walks became his favorite occupation, as the days warmed toward summer. And after them, as if by direct sequence, came the accesses of somnambulism. Once Belden plucked his roommate from the window, from which he was perilously leaning; and again he drew him, not without the exercise of some force, from the back of the old wood closet, where he was prying feverishly at the paneling. But not until a mid-May night did Belden hear the voice of the spirit that haunted his friend's slumbers.

An overpast thunderstorm was growling, as it withdrew, like a beaten but incorrigible dog. The trees, in the aftercurrent of the wind, swayed gently. The earth exhaled soft odors. Above them, intoxicatingly sweet, Belden smelt the perfume of the wild white violets which Laurie had brought home that day from his lonely walk. Suddenly he became aware that Laurie was leaning over the flowers, murmuring. He saw his friend's figure cross to the window. Fearful of startling him into a plunge, Belden slipped quietly to the floor and advanced, when the figure at the window spoke.

"The light! The light! Oh, my dear, my dear! I've come back to you."

The voice struck Belden motionless for the moment. Instead

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of the clear, high speech characteristic of Donald Laurie, the tones were deep, grave, and of a strange intonation.

"How long, how wearily long it's been, beloved," said the voice again, and Belden, for all his dismay, thrilled to the passion of it.

He set his hand upon Laurie's shoulder. With a quick, violent movement the other struck it aside.

"Do you stay me, sir?" cried the voice. Then with an abrupt change to Donald Laurie's crisp accent:

"What is it, Rip? What's the matter?"

"You've been dreaming again."

"Dreaming?" Laurie lifted a pallid face. "Oh, Rip, why did you wake me!"

The bitterness of that cry Belden carried into his own dreams. In the morning Laurie made no reference to the event. But he begged off from baseball practice that afternoon, and when he came in, it was with a handful of fresh white violets.

"Where do you get those, Don?" asked Belden.

"Aren't they wonders!" replied the other, evading the question. "And listen: isn't this a wonder, too?"

He dropped his voice a little, and quoted:

> "For the orange flower
> Ye may buy as ye will; but the violet of the wood
> Is the love of maidenhood;
> And he that hath worn it but once, though but for an hour,
> He shall never again, though he wander by many a stream,
> No, never again shall he meet with a flower that shall seem
> So sweet and pure; and forever, in after years,
> At the thought of its bloom or the fragrance of its breath,
> The past shall arise,
> And his eyes shall be dim with tears,
> And his soul shall be far in the gardens of Paradise,
> Though he stand in the shambles of death."

"Say, that *is* something, isn't it!" commented Belden, impressed. "Where did you dig it up?"

"From a forgotten book of poems, 'Wishmakers Town.' I was delving in the library among a lot of miscellany for material on my 'Campus Lore' stunt. By the way, Rip, did you know we used to be co-ed?"

"Get out! Not Ham-Coll."

"Well; Hamilton Oneida Academy. I found a mention of it

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here." He held up a spineless and flabby volume. "Oh; and here's something I didn't see before. Roster of our early fellow-alumnæ. Listen: Alice Denning, Prudence Miller, Mary Esther Ripley (one of your lot, Rip?), Elizabeth Brent, Faith Woolsey." He laid the pamphlet down. "Faith," he repeated softly.

"Pass it up, Don," said the senior, with some uneasiness. "It's getting on my nerves. So are your 'violets of the wood.' "

"All right," acquiesced Laurie, with his customary amiability. "If they worry you, I won't bring any more home."

So profoundly did they worry the usually phlegmatic Belden that he rose that night after his crony was asleep, and tossed the blooms out of the window. Then his heart came into his throat, for, as they fell, to scatter whitely upon the red shale walk below, Laurie stirred and moaned.

If he missed the violets he made no comment in the morning. Comment came, however, in startling form, at breakfast, from Twink Starr, the irrepressible.

"Who was the midnight Molly you were showing the campus to last night, Don?"

"Last night? What's the matter with your brain, Twink?"

"Nothing. Nor with my eyesight. Tak' thought to yersel, mannie. I was on my way to Carnegie, after a one o'clock session at the Psi Chi house, when muh startled eyes beheld you and the fair one Payson-Westoning in front of North."

"What a curse is rum!" observed Laurie, judiciously.

"One sarsaparilla," declared the sophomore. "Wouldn't I know that strut of yours, through a barrel of rum? Oh, Donnie! Donnie-Juannie Laurie!" Starr broke into song:

> Like the dew on the snowdrop lying
> Was the fall of your fairy feet.

And, by the way, she had a big bunch of snowdrops or something, in the front of her dress."

"What's that?" said a voice from behind, sharply. Belden had come into the room in time to hear the last speech.

"Nothing to jump me for," replied the sophomore. "Just scurfing Don a little on his flirty ways."

"But, Twink," said Laurie earnestly. "There's some mistake. I wasn't on the campus last night, either with or without a girl." Speaking, he touched, with an almost imperceptible gesture, the

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arrow badge on his breast. Starr's mischievous face changed instantly. "All right, old man," he said. "I was wrong, of course."

"And see that you remember it, Twink," added Belden, in a low tone. "Don was in bed and asleep before midnight, last night."

"Well, I must have 'em," said Starr. "No more of the soul-destroying sarsaparilla for me. Beer, from now on."

Less than a week later the "Kaiser" climbed the stairs to North-North-Second-Front-Middle. Officially, the "Kaiser" is Professor Max Marsh, head of the modern language department. In his thirty years' service, the quiet, cheery German has learned something of the inner nature of the undergraduate; and his relation to the "boys" is that rare relation of mutual respect, confidence and fellowship which exists between authority and the subject only in the small college. The "Kaiser" found Belden alone. Laurie was at the Lit. Board's afternoon council.

"Hello, Ripley," said the "Kaiser," seating himself on the senior's lounge.

"Hello, Professor!" greeted the other heartily. "Glad to see you. When can I tackle you for another round of golf?"

"When you learn not to take *more* than three puts on the home green," twinkled the "Kaiser," referring to a painful episode of the recent Union-Hamilton match. "But I came to talk to you about Laurie."

"What about Laurie?" queried the senior uneasily.

"He's been on the campus late at night with a girl."

"Some one's been lying," growled Belden.

"I've seen them myself."

"I beg pardon, Kai—Professor." Professor Marsh smiled. "Do you know who the girl was, sir?"

"No. A stranger to me. Whoever she is, Laurie should consider her—should consider her reputation. Mind," continued the kindly scholar, "I am not implying anything wrong. Laurie is thoughtless, but he is clean and honorable. And the girl's face was as pure as the violets she wears at her breast."

"When did you see Laurie and the girl, Professor?" asked Belden in a voice that made the other look at him keenly.

"Twice. I've been amusing myself of nights, searching for the comet, from the observatory. The first time was—let me see—last Friday night; Saturday morning rather, about two o'clock. I saw them again last night, shortly after midnight."

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"Professor, what would you say if I said it was impossible?"

"I should ask your proof."

"For Friday night I can't answer positively. But last night I worked here until two o'clock. Laurie was asleep at eleven. He never stirred from his bed in that time."

"You are certain?"

"On my honor, sir."

The "Kaiser" rose. There was the relaxation of unmistakable relief on his face. "I did not like to think of the boy as being so careless of a woman's good name," he said. "Ah, well! Aging eyes! Aging eyes! We'd best hurry that golf match before I go wholly blind. Good night, Ripley."

Hardly had he left when Laurie came in.

"What does the 'Kaiser' mean about my 'doppelganger'?" he asked curiously. "I just met him on the stairs, and he intimated that somebody had been taking my personal appearance in vain."

"Oh, a mistake of his about seeing you on the campus," returned the other evasively. "Going to the whist club to-night, Don?"

"No. I'm on noon chapel to-morrow, you know. I want to run over my spiel until I'm certain of it."

But when Belden returned the junior was not at work on his oration. He was poring over a number of old volumes of records which he had exhumed from some obscure nook of the library.

"Cut that," the senior advised curtly. "You waste too much time on that 'Campus Lore' stunt of yours."

"It's more than that," replied Laurie, looking up with dreamy eyes. "There's something in those musty pages that is calling—calling like a human voice, to me. You remember what I said about the striving to remember. Well, Rip," he swept his hand above the heaped-up prints, "I'm peering dimly across that farther margin of memory—just a little. Perhaps—perhaps," he added as if to himself, "I shall step over."

"Quit it," ordered the other, "you make me creep!" Then, curiously: "Aren't you at all—afraid, Don?"

"Afraid!" cried Laurie, with a deep thrill in his voice. "I've never known what gladness was until I've had this glimpse." He lifted his face, murmuring:

> "And his soul shall be far in the gardens of Paradise,
> Though he stand in the shambles of death."

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Belden undressed slowly and thoughtfully. Slowly he fell asleep, with the light of his roommate's research shining from the outer room across his eyes. The light was still burning when he awoke—awoke with the moist, fresh odor of white violets creeping into his brain. Laurie's bed was undisturbed. The outer room was empty. He ran to the window. Far above him a slow-surging current of wind moved, making deep music like the groundswell of a mightier ocean. The night was not black; it was gray, deep, fathomless gray. He leaned out into it, calling:

"Don! Oh, Don!"

A dim echo mocked his terror. There was no other reply. But it seemed to him that from the depths of the night a wistful and wonderful soul was striving to make answer; to tell him some unthinkable and lovely and awful mystery. The voice in the chapel spire spoke once, twice, thrice, and from the far-away, slumber-wrapped village another bell answered, confirming the measured message of Time.

Belden drew back from Infinity to the narrow limits of the room. Something compelled him to his friend's desk. A yellowed pamphlet lay open there. The page heading stood out, grim and ugly. "Report on a Case of Discipline Affecting the Morals of the Academy; in the year 1812." Belden read:

> The decree of the instructor is filed and approved, that for the breaking of rules, in that the said Faith Woolsey, of the township of Vernon, N. Y., being a student of this Academy in regular standing, consorted at unseemly hours upon the academic grounds with a male student, shall be expelled with every circumstance of public disgrace; and that the said Donald Laurie——

The words blurred before Belden's eyes. And the moments blurred in his brain, until he found himself pounding at the doors of his fraternity house, across the campus, to rouse the Arrowmen to the search for Laurie, '12; Laurie who had gone into the night on his own search.

A stir went through Wednesday noon chapel when Laurie failed to answer to his name. Oratory, like classicism, is the cherished tradition of the old college on the hill, and to "cut noon chapel" is heretical. In particular, as Laurie had been a sure candidate for prize-speaking appointment, wonder buzzed wordlessly across the seats. On the campus it swelled and spread. Then Belden

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spoke out, and the college scattered to the hunt for the missing man.

All day Belden tramped, with an inexplicable drawing at his heart toward his own room. Something insistently told him that there lay the clue. At dusk, he obeyed the summons. As he entered the room, the scent of violets, very faint, but insistent, thrilled his nerves. It led him, inert and unresisting, to the old wood closet, where once the sleep-walker had plucked at the panels. Blindly obedient to the impulse within, he beat and tore at the woodwork until it fell, disclosing an inner space and an old shelf. From this he took a brass-bound writing desk of dark rosewood. Unerringly he felt for the spring and released a shallow, secret drawer. From within rose a thin powder, making him dizzy and faint with the aroma of violets long, long dead. He staggered to the window with the letter in his hand. The ink was faded but still legible; the handwriting tall and quaint and girlish.

Donald, my Beloved: Come back to me. The disgrace is hard to bear, but you know, and I know, my innocence. It is the longing for you that is breaking my heart. I trust you with all my soul. I know you will return to me though it were an hundred years. But come soon. The white violets that you loved are in bloom again. You know where. Come soon or you may be too late to find Your FAITH.

Across it was endorsed heavily, "Too late, indeed! May 26, 1813." The writing of the despairing endorsement was, line for line and slant for slant, that which Donald Laurie in the year of wonders 1911 had left, with his sleep-guided hand, upon Belden's manuscript.

From a numb wonder, Belden's mind sharply reverted to acute activity. The violets had led him thus far; they would take him to the end of the trail. He ran to the room of Starr.

"Twink," he said, "you're the naturalist of the crowd. Where do wild white violets grow around here?"

The sophomore considered. "Only in one place that I know," he said. "And that's three miles away, up toward Vernon Centre. There are the ruins of an old stone homestead there."

"Take me to it," ordered Belden.

The two men loped through the gathering gloom up the long hill. Starr slackened, and cut diagonally across a patch of wood-

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land, coming out upon an all but obliterated road. It rose to a sharp knoll, crowned with oaks. A ruinous chimney reared and bristled among the leaves.

"They must have planted the violets long, long ago," panted Starr as they toiled up the ascent. "They've spread all over the place."

Indeed, the brow of the knoll was carpeted with the fragrant whiteness. It was thickest in one far corner, half encircled by shrubbery. Belden led the way thither. Beneath the shrubbery was a mound, whitened like snow with the blooms. Laurie lay with one arm thrown across it, his smiling face pillowed on the other.

Belden bent to touch the cold forehead; then straightened up, silently, to part the leaves of a rose bush which screened a toppling headstone. On the stained, chipped marble was inscribed:

Sacred to the Memory of Faith Woolsey.
Born Jan. 7, 1796. Died June 30, 1812.

The leaves slipped back as Belden withdrew his hand. He gathered a handful of violets and let them fall upon the dead, happy face. A sob from Starr made him turn.

"He—he's gone, isn't he?" said the sophomore brokenly.

Belden put an arm on the boy's heaving shoulders. "I don't know, Twink," he said very gently, "I think he's come back."

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